CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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Press Guidance: Central African Empire

Taken Questions:

Q: Can you tell us whether the American Ambassador has substantiated reports that 100 or so young people were slaughtered in the Central African Empire?

A: The evidence at our disposal indicates that a number of youths were killed in Bangui during the night of April 18 or 19 while in the custody of Central African authorities. We have had no hard evidence which would confirm the ages of those involved, the number of dead, or the manner of their deaths.

Q: Can you provide us with any of the results of the consultations with the Ambassador?

A: We do not have any announcements to make concerning consultations which are still underway.

New Questions:

Q: Can the Ambassador confirm, as has been reported from Paris, that Emperor Bokassa personally participated in the killings?

A: We have seen the news item from Paris but do not know whether or not the Emperor was present during the events.

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Q: Are there any discrepancies between Amnesty International's and the Ambassador's report?

A: Without contradicting the thrust of the Amnesty report, we have two observations. The youths rounded up by the Central African authorities in early April appeared to be secondary school students ranging in age from about 14 to 20. Secondly, the question of school uniforms is no longer an issue. It was, however, the spark that kicked off student unrest last January. Following the events in January the government suspended implementation of the school dress requirement.

Q: What is the issue?

A: Unrest in the CAE revolves around political and economic themes reflecting dissatisfaction with the current situation.

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